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**STREETS *and* FACES**

by


**SCUDDER MIDDLETON**



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English Literature

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**STREETS AND FACES**

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# STREETS AND FACES

BY  
SCUDDER MIDDLETON

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
FACES . . . . .	1
AROPHE . . . . .	3
MOTHER . . . . .	4
DELIVERANCE . . . . .	6
THE STRANGER . . . . .	7
GHOSTS . . . . .	8
BARREN . . . . .	9
THE MAN OF THE FIELD . . . . .	11
THE HEAVENLY INTRIGUE . . . . .	13
THE TOWER . . . . .	14
A WOMAN . . . . .	17
THE WALKER IN THE NIGHT . . . . .	18
THE CLERK . . . . .	21
PRESENCE . . . . .	24
THE WAX MUSEUM FOR MEN . . . . .	25
THE LOST SECRET . . . . .	27
THE WAITING WOMAN . . . . .	28
TO THE MOON . . . . .	32
CHILDREN . . . . .	33

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE RETURN . . . . .	38
IN UNION SQUARE . . . . .	39
INTERLUDE . . . . .	41
THE LOST COMRADE . . . . .	42
TO AN OLD COUPLE . . . . .	44
WRITTEN IN PALGRAVE'S GOLDEN TREASURY . . . . .	45
REVELATION . . . . .	47
SEA WISDOM . . . . .	49
THE ICONOCLAST . . . . .	50
RICHARD MIDDLETON . . . . .	51
WILTON BARRETT . . . . .	52
THE WHITE MAGICIAN . . . . .	53
THE JOURNEY . . . . .	55

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## TO L. D.

Young Keats had made a heaven for your face,  
And Shelley some Urania for your eyes,  
And he, who for the shadowy Deirdre wept,  
A fairy twilight for your woman's soul.  
I do not lift my songs above the earth,  
I lean no glittering ladder on the sky,  
For your white feet to find the sacred star;  
Seeing the common majesty of life,  
The temporal grace of man's achieving heart,  
I do not need a Paradise to phrase  
The mastering music of your human ways.



## FACES

In the night and in the day, unheralded  
they come  
Whispering, singing — bringing me out of  
the past  
The beautiful unguessed secret of their  
eyes. . . .

Faces, mingled with spray and the sun-  
light on shoal waters,  
Rise out of lost seas to tell me the joy of  
my childhood —  
He who was my playmate, takes my hand  
and again we wander.

Simple, brooding, earnest faces, lifted long  
ago to greet me as I passed the sum-  
mer fields,  
Come back with the murmur of wind and  
rain and waving grain —  
She who gave me to drink, when thirsty I  
paused at the farm-house gate,

## STREETS AND FACES

Smiles at me often over the brimming dipper.

Wistful, yearning, masked faces out of far cities,

Seen once for a moment, then suddenly gone in the whirl of the throng,

Move again beside me as I walk with the hurrying crowd —

Some nameless girl, of other lonely days, with bright eyes haunts the city streets. . . .

Hidden away in my heart is a world of lovely faces!

Faces of friends and lovers,

They wake me in the night with the music of words,

They touch my lips with belated kisses —

The woman I loved takes me again, in the dark, to her quiet breast.

## AROPHE

There was a house that loved the morning,  
Where now only the spring wind grieves.  
I will not wake again beside you  
And hear the sparrows in the eaves.

I will not reach again  
For budding boughs above you  
To draw the valorous blossom to your lips.  
Never again we two will wander  
The sea-blown road to the harbor ships.

The swift, white city makes a thunder  
Under my window night and day.  
I will not follow your magic finger  
Over the roofs to Arophe.

## MOTHER

Though through the pain of many months  
you held me

A mystery beneath your girlish heart,  
Though on your quiet breast my first tears  
fell

And there my first vague thoughts were  
weakly voiced,

Though with a guiding touch you sent me  
out

From your reluctant arms into the world,  
Though all your love went after me in  
prayers,

Though you made dreams around my boy-  
ish face,—

O Mother, this is pain to you and me —  
We are but little more than strangers now!

But little more than strangers, yet I feel  
A loneliness and longing for your arms;  
Could I but come again and be a child,  
Hear you in low voice call that secret  
name

## MOTHER

You gave me for my locks of yellow hair ;  
Could I reach out once more with little  
    hands

And find you near me in the silent night —  
O Mother, I would not be sad as now,  
Nor would you gaze so wistful at the  
    young !

For we had understood each other then.  
But time has torn me from your lovely  
    breast

And I have wandered far, O Mother, far  
From that sweet nursery of your peaceful  
    arms ;

Life told a different story to my heart  
And now I speak a language strange to  
    you.

Yet no — I would not, Mother, if I could,  
Come back and be again that little child !  
Though there is pain in me and loneliness,  
Though there are tears behind your quiet  
    eyes —

I must be now about my spirit's work !  
O Mother, this is bitter truth to me —  
We are but little more than strangers now !

## DELIVERANCE

I was a heavenly captive once  
Among the solitary stars.  
Go, tell them in the lane and street  
That I have bent the angel bars,  
And come upon the tides of light  
To feel the rocking Earth again!  
Tell them, where stream and ocean meet,  
God's Heaven is a lonely place,  
That I return to Birth and Death  
And Love's uncertain gift of grace.

## THE STRANGER

I am the lonely man the crowds pass by,  
I am the listener in the room above the  
street,

I am he who waits and knows not why —  
O City, have you no gift for me?

Have you no healing word to speak,  
No voice of all your many voices I can  
understand?

I have come a long way over roads that  
wounded,

I entered your streets with a dream in my  
breast —

Be not cruel, O beautiful City, for I came  
to love you—

Show me a flower or the face of a friend!

## GHOSTS

The ghosts of the spring are haunting  
autumn —

The sighing wind and the sobbing rain;  
I hear them come in the dusk and mutter,  
Searching the land for their loves again —  
For the pale new rose and the green vine  
twining,

For the beautiful grass and the singing  
grain;

Out of the gray of the day they wander  
Over the land for their loves again.

The ghosts of my youth are haunting my  
heart —

The simple trust and the dreams long slain;  
I feel them come in the wind and water,  
Searching my heart for their boy again —  
For the wondering child with the eyes of  
laughter,

For the glorious joy untouched by pain;  
Out of the dusk and the rain they wander,  
Searching my heart for their boy again.

## BARREN

Sometimes I wish that we had never met,  
That I had never seen those eyes of yours  
So wonderful and clear and full of youth,  
That I had never taught my hands to know  
And love the cool and golden of your hair,  
For now my love of you is full of pain,  
Deep knowing pain that numbs my heart  
and soul

And fills my eyes with hot and bitter tears  
Because of something that can never be!

O I have lately learned to hate the sound  
Of little children's feet, their little cries  
Have mocked me when within your arms I  
lay,

And I have seen their tiny hands reach out  
And take you from me in the lonely  
night.

O love, my love of you is full of pain!  
Sometimes I wish that we had never met,

## STREETS AND FACES

That I had gone the winding way of years  
To dream some quiet dream and call it  
life —

This had been best I think for you and  
me.

## THE MAN OF THE FIELD

Clear and strong against the glowing West  
I see you in the field, while over all the  
land the twilight falls;  
Pensive and silent in the dusk you stand,  
a part of evening's majesty.

Why did I pity you, not knowing or un-  
derstanding?

Gazing upon you now, I know it is you  
who should have pitied me —

I who was caught in the mesh of Time,  
A thing of brain, around whose heart the  
years were prison bars,

A servant to the nights and days,

A captive dreamer walking the little gar-  
nished cell of vanished hours,

Forever gazing through the gate that  
would not open —

O it is you who should have pitied me!

What to me the wisdom of the world bound  
up in painted cloth and gold,

## STREETS AND FACES

Who never let the unknown wanderer in  
to share my roof and food?

What to me the Pleiades, who never walked  
beneath their light

With understanding and unquestioning  
heart?

What to me the sweet and quiet face of  
Jesus slumbering on Mary's breast,

What this to me who never felt the warmth  
of little children in my arms?

O Adam of the sacred fields, you till an-  
other Eden in my heart

And plant the holy seed that soon will  
sing!

## THE HEAVENLY INTRIGUE

As he who catches, in passing,  
A glimpse of himself in a mirror,  
Suddenly becomes aware of a being  
Detached from the scheme of the moment,  
So we two, in each other's arms,  
At a time of wonder and silence,  
Saw, for a flash, our figures  
Move and blend in the heavenly intrigue —  
Not as the King and the Queen of creation,  
But as the foolish deluded builders,  
Rearing impossible towers and singing  
Under the whip of an absolute master.

## THE TOWER

(Madison Square)

Tower rising through the low hung clouds,  
The moon is on your marble and the gleam  
Of a thousand candles in your golden  
dome;

You fill the dark with wonder dazzling the  
stars,

Leaning another Campanile on the gor-  
geous night!

Another Campanile!

At the sound of your bells

The gone city of water echoes again with  
life.

The dreams of monks and the lust and  
laughter of Venice

Lurk in your shadows and your high-flung  
dome;

The wind around you is the wind of Rome

## THE TOWER

Blowing from pageantries of pomp and  
vice;  
Your light is such as burned to guide the  
galleons  
When singing Petrarch was a boy  
And roamed the winding Arno for the  
lovely Laura!

Another Campanile!  
Often I have seen you as now, rising high  
above the shaking streets,  
Reaching a great white arm into the hur-  
rying clouds;  
Many sunsets have I seen melting and fad-  
ing on your dome of gold;  
And I have watched the lights of dawn  
Blossom and glow on your eastern panes,  
Until you seemed a vine of roses clamor-  
ing to the day!

Another Campanile!  
Built on the glamorous dust of death,  
You are a symbol too of towers yet to be.  
Now when I see you, calm above the fev-  
ered street,  
Immaculate in the moonlight of the spring,

## STREETS AND FACES

You are no rigid plan of stone and steel  
But something vastly human reaching to  
the stars.

. . . . .

O the living tower of Man!  
Rising out of love and the sweet, prolific  
earth,  
With visioning lamps set burning in the  
dome of thought  
And the world-reverberant bells of speech  
and song  
Ringing along the waiting years!

## A WOMAN

She had an understanding with the years;  
For always in her eyes there was a light  
As though she kept a secret none might  
guess —

Some confidence that Time had made her  
heart.

So calmly did she bear the weight of pain,  
With such serenity accept the joy,  
It seemed she had a mother-love for life,  
And all the days were children at her  
breast.

## THE WALKER IN THE NIGHT

I awake in the night and hear the sound  
    of passing feet.  
Only a moment it lingers outside my win-  
    dow,  
Then dies away along the empty street;  
Only a moment it echoes in my room,  
Yet I lie awake a long time after,  
Lonely and wondering.

Who are you, walker in the night, break-  
    ing in on my dreams,  
Then suddenly gone?  
A dim shadow moving swiftly across my  
    window, and a little sound,  
Coming out of darkness and silence, leav-  
    ing darkness and silence,  
Irretrievably lost —  
Who are you that I lie awake, wondering  
    and lonely,  
Thinking of you?

## THE WALKER IN THE NIGHT

O walker in the night, we are not  
strangers!

We have walked together many times, I  
know,

Down many glorious streets beneath the  
truthful sun!

In the violet shadows of the city we have  
met and passing, gazed upon each  
other's face;

We have been together in the glare of  
changing lights;

In the jostling crowd we have caught each  
other's laughter, little words,

Or seen the sorrow hidden away behind  
each other's eyes.

Together we have heard the singing of the  
city —

The roll of many wheels and the beat of  
a million feet,

Heard the whistles at dawn and the far,  
faint call through the night

Of the boats on the bay and the hurrying  
outbound trains.

Many times we both have walked under the  
watching stars and the pilgrim moon

## STREETS AND FACES

Along forsaken lamp-lit streets in the quiet  
places of the city;  
Gone by the silent houses dark, when all  
were sleeping,  
Questioning, thoughtful, lifting up our  
eyes to the unanswering sky —  
Lonely and wondering!

O walker in the night,  
More than a passing shadow and a little  
sound are you to me!  
We have been together long, O spirit of  
the beautiful crowd!  
We are friends, we are lovers, we are chil-  
dren out of the womb of the city!  
More sacred than any dream of sleep is  
the dream you bring,  
Passing my window in the silent night —  
I lie awake a long time, lonely and won-  
dering,  
Thinking of you!

## THE CLERK

“Two and two are four, four and three  
are seven”—

That is all that he can say where he sits  
in Heaven;

“Two and two are four, four and three  
are seven”—

Through the long celestial day.

“Two and two are four, four and three  
are seven”—

Once he used to sing it down the halls of  
Heaven;

“Work is hard but there’s an answer,  
Far ahead great things are waiting,  
I will add the magic Figures,  
I will seek the gleaming Balance —  
I will win the Master’s praise.”

“Two and two are four, four and three  
are seven”—

Not so careful now in the place of Heaven;

## STREETS AND FACES

“Work is good but there is pleasure,  
I am young with time before me —  
O bright angel, from the shops of Heaven,  
Dance awhile, the Harper’s playing —  
Drink the rainbow wine with me!”

“Two and two are four, four and three  
are seven”—

Then he only droned it on his stool in  
Heaven;

“Work is bread and bread is living,  
Little mouths grow very hungry  
In the rooms of Paradise —  
She must wear a golden feather  
When she walks along the sky.”

“Two and two are four, four and three  
are seven”—

Just a whisper now through the walls of  
Heaven;

“O I cannot find the error,  
Cannot strike the gleaming Balance —  
All the magic’s out of Figures,  
All the wonder out of loving,  
And the Master has no praise.”

## THE CLERK

“Two and two are four, four and three  
are seven”—

Still he mutters on at the books of Heaven;

“Work is bread and bread is living”—

Through the long celestial day.

## PRESENCE

Last night I lay beside you while you slept  
And watched the rhythmic rising of your  
    breast;  
Outside the city trembled in her old un-  
    rest,  
Calling along the lonely lamp-lit streets.  
I only heard you breathing at my side,  
I only felt your hand within my hand,—  
The little pulse forever beating songs!

To-night my face is far away from yours;  
My eyes look out across the moving sea,  
Rising and falling underneath the moon;  
I hear the wash of water and the beat  
Of waves forever breaking on the sand.  
O love, though I am not with you to-night,  
Here is the rhythm of your sleeping  
    breast,  
Here is the music of your little hand!

## THE WAX MUSEUM FOR MEN

Boldly it stands beneath the tallest towers

Upon a street of granite and of glass;  
The ever changing crowds that come and pass

Are mirrored in its windows day and night.  
There is no mark above the doors to tell  
What lies beyond the thresholds wide and dim,

Only a glittering sign with letters grim  
Spelling the words: "For Men. Come  
In and See."

But I have entered through its calling doors

And know the hideous secret kept apart  
Here in the city's vast, prodigious heart —  
Hidden away to shame the truthful sun.  
Behind its quiet walls my eyes have seen  
A refutation of all reaching towers,  
All pageantries that streak the glamorous hours

## STREETS AND FACES

And go to shuddering music down the  
street!

For there, disgraced, the lovely Body  
lies —

Man's shining Body bleeding, wrecked, for-  
lorn,

Its sacred temples trampled down and  
torn,

And all the marvel and the magic gone!

There in the silence of a little room  
Are mocked the songs and all the dreams  
that rise

Around the Paradise of human eyes —

The hymn to Beauty in the face of Helen,

The voice of fair Iseult along the sea,

And my own love's sweet lips come home to  
me —

Damned there in cold unanswerable wax!

There the eternal pilgrimage of Love —

Man ever wandering to a woman's  
breast —

Becomes a worthless and a wanton quest:

A tramp with harlots through the streets  
of Time!

## THE LOST SECRET

Though there is something that I long  
to tell,

I do not often stop and speak to them,  
For when I do it is an awkward phrase  
That comes self-conscious, halting to my  
lips —

A foolish chatter such as nurses make —  
And they grow ill at ease and turn away,  
Or else look wide-eyed up at me and smile,  
As though they thought it fun that I, so  
big,

Knew not the secret ways of little words;  
And this is strange to me, for once I spoke  
That very language they can understand.  
I think I learned it from the simple flowers,  
Or it was taught me by the quiet stars —  
But now, somehow, I have forgotten it,  
Somehow have lost the secret of it all,—  
Now I am silent when I am with them,  
Though there is something that I long to  
say.

## THE WAITING WOMAN

See me sitting, waiting here,  
Waiting where the lights are blear,  
With my spangles and my lace,  
And my haggard painted face;  
Fever-eyed and frowsy-haired,  
With a powdered bosom bared —  
Waiting in the night to scan  
Desire in the face of man.

See me sitting, waiting here  
For the boy whose eyes are clear,  
Half believing in the worth  
Of my counterfeited mirth,  
Half deceived by smiles and sighs —  
Seeking Love's delightful eyes —  
Seeking me for what love seems —  
I his first love out of dreams.

See me sitting, waiting here  
For the man of pain and fear,

## THE WAITING WOMAN

Nameless, lonely in the night,  
Wanting words and wanting light;  
Longing for a heart to know  
Just a little of his woe —  
Many such my lips have kissed,  
Keeping love's belated tryst.

See me sitting, waiting here  
For the man to buy me beer,  
For the man of dirt within,  
Brooding some new body-sin;  
Seeking in a drunken lust  
What the angels hold in trust.  
Foul he comes to fouler ways —  
This is little since he pays.

See me sitting, waiting here —  
What are they who come me near,  
Down the narrow nights of time —  
Eager Youth and lonely Prime,  
And the Beast of one desire,  
Reaching with the claws of fire —  
What are they to me who wait  
Dark, inscrutable to fate?

See me sitting, waiting here  
Where I've waited year on year,

## STREETS AND FACES

Patient like a thing of stone  
While the centuries have flown;  
On my slaving woman breast  
All man's sorrows writhe or rest;  
Many souls have played a part  
In the making of my heart.

See me sitting, waiting here,  
Waiting where the lights are drear,  
Waiting until man shall sing  
In his heart the perfect thing —  
See and understand for this  
All the burden of my kiss —  
Know it was the good in me  
Wrought my body's infamy.

O I have been waiting long  
For the music of this song!  
Silent in the black of years  
I have waited cold in tears;  
Once alone my ears have heard  
From the dark its perfect word,  
Heard it sounded once afar  
In the Roman lupanar.

O the singing Nazarene —  
He had made me sweet and clean,

## THE WAITING WOMAN

Placed my hand within His hand  
That my heart might understand!  
O my heart His heart within,  
He had seen beneath my sin  
Burned the everlasting flame —  
Soul of me and Christ the same!

See me sitting, waiting here,  
Waiting where the lights are blear,  
With my spangles and my lace,  
And my haggard painted face;  
Fever-eyed and frowsy-haired,  
With a powdered bosom bared —  
Waiting in the night to scan  
Darkness in the face of man.

## TO THE MOON

Questioning you come  
Sibyl-like out of the darkened ocean,  
Trailing your argent hair  
Across the broken water.

Wanderer,  
Take me into your cool bosom  
And make me a part of you.  
Lay your soft hands of light over my eyes  
And mix me with your memories.

Tender vestal of the night,  
Give me your heavenly gift of peace.

## CHILDREN

### I

*Heavy are the rain-drops falling from the  
eaves.*

*I awake in the dark and hear them,  
After the storm is over.*

*Drip, drip, drip,—  
On the wooden walk below.*

*Louder than the howl of the trembling  
storm*

*Are the little voices of forgotten rain.*

*Though I cover my ears,  
Still the blood through my veins keeps  
time*

*To the certain, fatal falling —  
Dead! Dead! Dead!*

### II

*She stood above me in the narrow hallway.  
Looking up I saw and knew her:  
Young Rossetti's Damozel,*

## STREETS AND FACES

Leaning on the golden stair-rail,  
Yellow country daisies in her hand.  
Up there, too, I knew was heaven —  
Not the kind, perhaps, God rules in,  
Giving stars to hopeless lovers,  
But a little four-walled heaven,  
Looking out on city pavements  
Where the angels rarely walked.

### III

*Eve, my beloved Eve,  
Be not afraid!  
My arms are around you;  
He cannot find us here.  
Let His flaming Cherubim wield their fiery  
swords —  
They guard an empty garden now.*

*Eve, Eve, my beloved Eve,  
Lift up your face and look at me. . . .  
Ah, you are lovelier now  
Than when I saw you first  
Beside the red Euphrates in the dawn!  
Do you remember? —  
We were two children and we knew not  
what we did.*

## CHILDREN

*Eve, my beloved Eve,  
Weep not for those forbidding years;  
Take me again upon your breast —  
A wiser Paradise is in our kiss!*

*O pain and pleasure of the Fruit!*

### IV

I shut the door on the shaking street.  
The hall was silent and dark.  
Then up two flights of stairs —  
Slowly, wearily, with heavy feet.  
I thought of the times I had heard my  
    name,  
There on that narrow stair-way —  
But now she did not call.  
She lay on a cot;  
Her eyes were wet and she stirred,  
Restless in pain.  
On the wall the yellow gas-flame flickered;  
It filled the room with ghostly shadows —  
A mockery of the sun that had loved her  
    windows.  
Her clothes lay on the chair beside her,  
Huddled, pathetic — white things like her-  
    self.

## STREETS AND FACES

The doctor spoke —  
I remember only the whisky upon his  
    breath,  
Then his step on the stair  
And the shameless voice of the city  
As he opened the outer door.  
Then silence, pitiless silence. . . .  
Two poor children, ignorant, bewildered,  
    baffled, beaten —  
Alone in silence. . . .  
Only the hiss of the yellow gas-flame  
And the creak of the wooden cot.

### V

*Outside in the barn the horses are moving;  
Restlessly they stamp on the floor of their  
    stalls.*

*(Knock, knock, knock,—  
Will the door ever open?)*

*O creatures out there in the dark,  
Are you, too, aware of the treacherous  
    night,  
The calm, deceitful night that is plan-  
    ning,*

## CHILDREN

*Forever scheming behind the mask of  
moon and stars?*

*(Knock, knock, knock,—  
Will the door ever open?)*

*Poor, helpless beasts are we that know,  
Yet do not understand!*

## THE RETURN

Hold me, O hold me, love — your lips are  
life!

Here on your heart my heart now under-  
stands:

Home have I come at last from alien  
lands —

A pilgrim through the darkness to your  
eyes!

Hold me, my love,— I know the answer  
now.

O wayward, ever wandering feet of man —  
Always the journey ends where it be-  
gan! . . .

Out of my mother's arms into your own!

Hold me, O love, serene against your  
breast!

The sun takes up the wave and gives the  
rain.

Over the dead the grass is green again.  
The lark is singing on the ruined wall.

## IN UNION SQUARE

For me it is a pleasant thing to sit  
Here, in the Square, the sunlight on my  
face;

A pleasant thing to see the simple grace  
Of men and girls as they go walking by;  
I like this city-sound of moving feet,  
This murmuring of voices in the day —  
They waken little dreams in me that stay,  
And fill my waiting heart with prescient  
thoughts.

But you, old man, what do you watch and  
wait?

Beside me many noons you now have sat,  
With dusty ragged coat and broken hat,  
Touching your stained gray beard with  
wrinkled hands;

I do not think this pageant of the crowd,  
Which for my eyes holds wonder and de-  
light,

## STREETS AND FACES

Has any lovely meaning in your sight —  
You keep no tryst with dreams in Union  
Square.

Yet when I turn from gazing on the  
throng —

The sweet-eyed women and the youthful  
men —

To look at you all bowed and bent, the  
song

I love of marching feet somehow is done,  
The voices die; I understand you then —  
You silent prophet sitting in the sun!

## INTERLUDE

Slowly she opens her eyes and lifts her  
head from the pillow.

Through the chinks in the tight-closed  
shutter

Thin lines of light pierce the room's dark-  
ness,

Pointing like fingers at the floor

Where her clothes lie strewn and crumpled.

For long she leans on her elbow and  
watches,

Entranced by a dream stolen out of her  
slumber,

Vivid and glowing,

Flowing like music on the swift inquiring  
sunlight.

Then the form at her side stirs and the  
rhythm is broken,

Hard hands pull her down to a face seek-  
ing kisses —

A slave again, serving her master.

## THE LOST COMRADE

I had hoped, when I saw you,  
There in the tavern,  
So free and so strong,  
That we would be comrades,  
Going together always along an outward  
road  
Through dawn and noon and night-time —  
Brothers-in-arms,  
For the wounds and the rewards.

But you said:—  
“Friend, let us loiter awhile  
Here in this pleasant place.  
The wine is sweet and the fire is good,  
And they around us have wit and laughter.  
Better some easy comfort for the flesh  
Than a lonely path through the starless  
darkness;  
Better the sheltering warmth of these  
homely rafters

## THE LOST COMRADE

Than a gray sky blowing a chill damp  
wind."

— And almost I stayed, just to be with  
you!

But, even as you spoke, I heard the sound  
of the battle,

Outside, down the road, over the hill —  
somewhere,

And I could not stay to drain the glass  
with you.

I drew my sword while you toasted a lady,

And I left you singing,

You and the others,

There in the rosy tavern.

## TO AN OLD COUPLE

Wait a little while —  
Death will answer to your nodding;  
Like a friend he will come and find you,  
Take you both and fold you from the sun.

Two old, tired people!  
What does it matter to you now  
That no one thing was completed,  
Not even a single task set the early heart  
Achieved in fulness?

Bow on your mute assents to life!  
The years unravel the designs of youth,  
Yet time brings at the last  
The serene illusion of accomplishment.  
When your two wrinkled hands meet in  
the night —  
You know that all is well.

Wait awhile —  
The door will open.

WRITTEN IN PALGRAVE'S GOLDEN  
TREASURY OF SONGS AND  
LYRICS

Here are the beautiful words of men and  
women.

Here is the echo, only the echo, of the  
music of their lives —

The songs and threnodies —

Coming to us now like whispers out of the  
dark,

Beautiful words that tell so little!

O to have known them, these men and  
women like ourselves!

To have seen the light in their eyes and  
heard them speak;

To have felt the touch of their hands,  
friendly in our own;

To have gone with them under the golden  
sun through city streets,

Or over meads and heathered lands,

## STREETS AND FACES

Or silent stood by them near oceans in  
the night!

Here is only the echo of the music of their  
lives,  
Beautiful words that tell so little.

## REVELATION

Not in those thoughtless moments when  
our hearts

Were like the little children's wild and  
free —

And we forgetful in our new found joy  
Went wandering along unearthly ways —  
Celestial playmates with the stars for  
toys —

Not in those moments, O my bright-eyed  
child,

Was our love's hidden face to us revealed;  
Nor when we paused, the disillusioned pair,  
Reaching with groping hands across the  
dark

To hear, unanswering, the solemn words  
Of Life, the unrelenting questioner;  
Not then, nor even in those living hours  
When passion held a rose against our  
cheeks

And made a music of our beating hearts

## STREETS AND FACES

As each to each they lay the long night  
through —

Not in those moments was our love re-  
vealed!

But when to-day from dreams we both  
awoke

With touch of early sunlight on our eyes,  
To hear the city singing in the dawn,  
O then there came a morning in our hearts!  
For then we knew what poverty it was  
Had kept us lonely though our lips had  
met!

As silently we listened side by side,  
Far away we heard like magic flutes  
The whistles calling to the breaking day,  
And rising to us from the shaking streets,  
Mixed with the serenade of marching feet,  
The sound of laughter and of little words.  
O then we saw not in ourselves alone  
Could we hold love a thing apart, con-  
cealed,

But that together fearless we must go  
Leading our love all-glorious in the sun  
Along the singing highways of the world.

## SEA WISDOM

She'll come again with her incomparable  
    smile,  
And I'll not be afraid.  
The winds that brought Ulysses home  
Have blown away the mists that lay  
Between her eyes and mine.

There'll be no silence when she calls my  
    name,  
For I have learned at last to speak.  
The waves that taught Demosthenes  
Have made my song as free and strong  
As her unfaltering speech.

## THE ICONOCLAST

She needed love to crystallize her  
dreams —

Of flesh alone his kisses were conceived;  
A word had called her forth, the pioneer —  
He showed her life dressed up in cap and  
bells.

Because she was identified with all  
That he had either lost or put aside,  
He wished her bitter even as himself  
To prove the error he had found in God.

RICHARD MIDDLETON AND A  
CERTAIN CRITIC

Speak not his name, he can not hear your  
voice,  
For long ago he put you out of mind —  
You and your shouting world were not his  
choice,  
Having a dream to follow and to find.

Must he be judged, then let it be by one  
Faithful to Beauty in his soul's distress,  
Who in that silence when the song is done  
Has felt the pain of mortal loveliness.

Ah no! He keeps no shame nor dark re-  
grets  
Where now he calmly goes, his music  
sung —  
Only a memory of violets  
Beneath the feet of the belovéd young.

## WILTON BARRETT

To him they were not merely pretty toys,  
To play with for a day then put aside.  
The tiny craft he built with so much care  
Were symbols of those free and lovely  
things  
That have their being in the artist's heart.

The summer-boarders smiled and had  
their joke;  
For it was strange to see a man full-  
grown,  
Whittling away through summer after-  
noons.  
Perhaps they did not know that Shelley,  
too,  
Made little boats and gave them airy  
names  
While *Adonais* echoed in his mind.

## THE WHITE MAGICIAN

Because he had a dream of lovelier things  
He would not praise this life of bread and  
    lust,

Would not renounce his vision for the  
    ease

That comes of thinking with the common  
    lot.

There was a white magician in his mind  
By whose immaculate wand he saw new  
    worlds,

Bright, swift, immeasurable dancing stars  
That had their golden orbits near the sun  
And were like mirrors to the hearts of  
    men.

What if the people killed him for a fool? —  
Within the minds of those who under-  
    stood,

The white magician, wisely unperturbed,  
Still conjured Beauty by a subtle wand,

## STREETS AND FACES

And there was nothing lost save flesh and  
bone

And some sweet human presence —  
scarcely missed.

## THE JOURNEY

What matter where the Apple grows?  
True heroes never count the miles.  
The journey leads to where it leads —  
Sargasso or the Western Isles.

No one place holds the dreams of all.  
Earth wears a multi-colored robe,  
And there are new Hesperides  
In every corner of the globe.

Some find the fruit like Hercules —  
For such the moon and sun may stop;  
Yet never doubt that Sisyphus  
Achieved at last the mountain top.







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Middleton, Scudder  
Streets and faces.

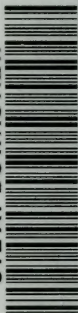
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